

**Town of Vernon  
Hockanum River Linear Park Committee  
Special Meeting  
Minutes – October 4, 2019**

**Present:** Members: George Arthur, Ann Letendre  
Guest: Don Bellingham, Vernon Greenway Volunteers; P&R Staff, Marty Sittler

(HRLP meeting called to order at 9:5 am by Chairman Ann Letendre)

**1. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of previous meeting of July 26, 2019 were deferred to next meeting due to lack of quorum.

**2. Old Business**

**A. Hockanum River Trail Reports**

Refer to Arthur report and Vernon Greenway Volunteers report (attached) for details.

Review of trail needs:

1. George Arthur reported that he had identified and documented all the trail structures (stream crossing bridges, boardwalks, retention walls, signs) he had constructed on the Vernon trails, 90 in total. He has also identified their GPS coordinates. He created a file and sent it to Marty. He notes that maintenance of these structures are not typically part of the regular trail maintenance that is done by the Vernon Greenway Volunteers. George noted that an inspection routine needs to be set up for the structures.
2. Corner Park viewpoint at Paper Mill Pond needs brush cleared; Marty asks that we send a request to P&R.
3. Paul's Pizza – Access Rd is blocked, need to install "Do Not Block" sign. Litter needs to be cleaned up here. George spent 3 days cleaning and clearing the area.

**B. New Business – Review required work and costs to complete trail: Pleasantview to Manchester line**

June-July George Arthur cleared a riverside trail on east side of river from Starbucks to the old Golfland to enable access to evaluate trail structure and safety needs to complete this section of the HRLP trail in Vernon. He reported that the Friends of HRLP (Arthur, King, Letendre, Bellingham, Gingras) and Marty Sittler walked the cleared trail in August to make the assessment. Work scope and costs would be submitted for the next Recreational Trail grant round.

These needs were identified, starting at Golfland heading north to Starbucks area, as an initial estimate; the needs may be refined as trail use is initiated.

1. Start at river crossing of entrance to commercial operations (Big Sky, motel, law offices). Park in lot on east side of river before bridge; obtain owner permission to park; install signage at this location and CBYD; or use existing post for parking and trail sign; explore installation of kiosk (\$2000); cross river at Subway; obtain permission of owner to use bridge; trail direction signs.  
*Est cost: Signs and installation \$500; kiosk \$2000*
2. At sewer cover locations; mark sewer covers as trail markers.
3. Remove brush pile – on (Talcottville Dev property); install possible access sign from TD corp (Cost – labor? \$300?); put caution maps, may be impassable due to rise of river after storm.
4. Area around detention pond dam: add loop trail around dam.
5. Call DOT – permission to cross fencing, using bolls to replace current temporary stiles; need to cross over guard rail on Kelly Rd – how make easier.
6. Caution signs and trail crossing on Kelly Rd: State DOT permission needed; town engineering department assistance needed; local Traffic Authority OK needed  
*Est cost - \$2000*
7. French Club parking area Kelly Rd: Obtain owner permission for parking areas; install trail access sign
8. In lieu of Weston Place – new trail parallel to Weston constructed; need owner permission, trail sign.
9. Tri-City access point – obtain owner permission for trail access and parking; access trail sign; cross guard rail; construct steps down to trail  
*Cost - \$1000*
10. Cross stream at base of steps; construct 15 ft boardwalk; construct elevated bridge over stream;  
*Est cost - \$12,000*

RECEIVED  
VERNON TOWN CLERK  
19 NOV 18 AM 8:42

11. Circle Associates section – Trail along dune, viewpoint, sitting bench
12. Town of Vernon property – 4 cleared trails on site – access to Pleasantview two possible routes: through Dean property, or up hill to Starbucks, along Rt 83, or possibly through “back yard” of commercial owners, to Pleasantview Drive, then to Pleasantview Marsh park.
  - a. River trail owner permission (Dean) needed for access to Pleasantview
  - b. Up hill towards Starbucks: 8 ft boardwalk needed; George can build it at \$200; otherwise \$1000; trail signs to Starbucks and to Pleasantview; DOT permission along Rt 83 to Pleasantview Drive.  
*Est cost - \$1200*  
*Total cost estimate: trail \$18,700, plus est misc requirements, \$1,300: \$20,000.*

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.

Respectively submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairman

### **Vernon Greenways Volunteers Report July 27, 2019 to October 4, 2019**

#### Census Data 2019

Infrared monitor at Church Street checked for proper operation weekly.

The fourth and final two hour session of manual counts to develop an adjustment factor for the infrared counter at Church Street was accomplished on August 18, 2019 by John Horan and me.

#### Census Surveys 2019

The fourth and final Census Survey to get data and feedback from trail users to use in planning i.e., how often do you use the trail, what do you like about the trail, what is your zip code, etc. We submitted a total in excess of 180 for the year.

#### Infrared Monitor

John Horan and I determined we would get a higher count of participants by moving the current placement of the infrared counter. On October 16, 2019 a temporary infrared monitor will be installed on the asphalt hillside from Phoenix Street headed toward Bolton. The current monitor will remain where it is between Phoenix Street and the Church Street parking lot until year end.

#### Trail Maintenance Team

We accomplished eight Trail Maintenance Team outings during this time period: July 24 and 30, August 6, 14, 20, 29 and September 9, 17. Five of the outings were on the Rockville Extension of the Rail Trail. The final three were on the Hop River Trail. Due to an early dusk we have ceased the TMT for 2019.

#### Weed Whacking Team

We accomplished three Weed Whacking Team outings: August 3, 10 and 17. We did VCMS, the Suspended Bridge and Overlook and redid Dart Hill South

#### Vernon Rotary

The Vernon Rotary Club completed the painting of the long fence between Morrison and Rau Streets that was covered with graffiti that was in the planning stage at last report. Potential repairs were ignored at this time.

#### Bug Day

The check of trees for damage on the Rail Trail from Church Street to the 1 mile marker toward Bolton by the Asian Long Horned Beetle and at Dart Hill North by the Spotted Lanternfly took place on September 14. No damage was found by the 12 participants.

### **ARTHUR REPORT – July 26, 2019 to September 27, 2019**

I worked 105 hours during this period, some hours as an employee and some as a volunteer. The trails and parks are in good condition.

The HRLP Committee walked the unfinished trails from Manchester to Pleasantview Drive. I explained the current status of the paths and compared it to the recent Master Plan Status report of March 16, 2019. The committee discussions are included.

#### FIRST WALK AUGUST 6, 2019

We walked from the Manchester HRLP trail to the Free Spirit parking lot on Kelly Road. The path was depicted in Figure 1.1 of Segment One in March. The results were as follows:

The Manchester Trail connection is on the east side of the Hockanum River. The trail is narrow and has a No Bike sign. The trail to the south passes a Vernon sewer pump station, an island dedicated to Doug Smith and Lynch Toyota. The Vernon trail is permitted on a 25 ft wide Town easement on top of an existing sewer line. There are sewer covers on the trail and the first cover is on the opposite side of the drive from the Manchester Trail on grassy terrain.

- The trail must cross the Tankerhoosen River. *Discussion:* Rather than build a bridge across the river it is preferred to cross on an existing bridge to the east by a Subway Restaurant. An automotive dealer owns the property on both sides of the Tankerhoosen. The bridge is in good condition.
- The trail is frequently flooded at the location where the trail leaves grassy terrain and enters woodland. *Discussion:* Any heavy rains will cause the flooding and prevent walking toward the north under I-84.
- A stile was built over a DOT fence just north of the I-84 underpass and the path was made to cross over a 20 ft wide drain channel on the existing rock dam. Figures 1.7,1.8,1.9 and 1.9A contain more information. *Discussion:* The committee approved the path on the dam. (the path was improved 9/4/19).
- Another stile was built to allow the path to get to sewer cover STA 24. *Discussion:* The stile should be moved to be on the Town easement and aligned with the path on the dam.
- There is an occasional need for a short boardwalk (8 ft?) just south of cover STA27. *Discussion:* The boardwalk was approved.
- There is an occasional need for a boardwalk (20 ft?) just south of a stile at Kelly Road Figure 1.13. *Discussion:* The boardwalk was approved.
- There is a wobble at the top of the stile. *Discussion:* Wobble should be stabilized. (done 9/16/19).
- The path is too steep at Kelly Road (the path was improved 9/16/19).
- It is too difficult to cross over the guardrail at Kelly Road. *Discussion:* No solution was discussed.

#### SECOND WALK AUGUST 15, 2019

We walked from the parking lot at Free Spirit to the drainage stream at the end of the Tri-City plaza. The path was depicted in Figure 1.14 of Segment One in March. The results were as follows:

- A new path had been cut north through the Tri-City plaza forest from the Free Spirit parking lot. *Discussion:* The Free Spirit and parking lot have been purchased by a French Social Club. The map in Figure 1.14 depicts the trail on Weston Pl – it should be revised. The tree stump on the path just north of the parking lot should be cut. (done 9-3-19)
- There is a steep hole on the path in the Giuletti property containing the ruins of a well and broken glass bottles. *Discussion:* the hole should have some filling with dirt, mulch or wood.

- A new path has been added in the wetlands along the river and it is often wet and unusable. The trail has a scenic view of the river at its north end. *Discussion:* The trail should be added to the map and the view should be opened up with perhaps a seating bench.
- There has been a large amount of trash added onto the path where it meets the Tri-City pavement. *Discussion:* The path exit should be relocated to an area that is less apt to be trashed. (done 8-20-19)

### THIRD WALK SEPTEMBER 9, 2019

We walked from the pavement end at the north end of Tri-City plaza to the south end of the Dean property on Pleasantview Drive. The path was depicted in Figure 1.14 of Segment One in March. The results were as follows:

- There is a steep slope down to a small drainage stream with some wetlands. Figure 1.18 and 1.19 show the area. *Discussion:* Need steps on the slope, bridge across the stream and a boardwalk across wetlands (10 ft?). Flood in the river can cause backup that raises the stream level by a foot. Lumber for construction can be delivered to the site.
- The walk continued north along the river on Circle Associates property. *Discussion:* There are opportunities for river viewpoints from the dry trail on Circle Associates property. There is a scenic river rapid at the north end of the property that might also be a good location for a seating bench.
- There are four trail paths on Town property. A River Trail, an Upper River Trail, an Upper Trail and a Connector Trail.
- The committee continued to walk the River Trail on Town property. It is in wetlands and the condition worsens towards the north. The trail elevation becomes one foot higher than the elevation of the river when the river is at its lowest level. *Discussion:* The trail is unusable after heavy rains.
- There are large trees that fell from the west across the river and block the River Trail on the east side. Figures 1.21 and 121A show the trees. *Discussion:* If the river trail is to be left on the map, the downed trees should be cleared.
- The committee turned around and returned to a trail junction to walk toward the northeast on the dry Upper River Trail. *Discussion:* There is a need for a short (8 ft?) boardwalk at the beginning of the trail.
- The walk rejoined the River Trail in a drier area and continued to the south end of the Dean property. *Discussion:* The committee approved this section of the River Trail and also approved the Upper River Trail.
- The walk returned on the Upper River Trail to a junction with the Upper Trail and followed it to a junction with the Connector Trail. We walked to a silt fence at the base of a steep elevation change. We continued up the steep climb to the pavement of the developed restaurant properties. *Discussion:* The property ownership changes at the silt fence and leaves Town property to join the property containing the Wendy restaurant. The slope is 30% at the beginning of the climb and needs 8 feet of steps. A wooden step assembly has been constructed and could be installed with owner permission. The committee approved the Connector Trail.
- The walk returned south on the Connector Trail to a junction with the Upper Trail and followed it to rejoin the River Trail and returned south to Tri-City.